

**MEMORANDUM
OFFICE OF THE
COUNTY EXECUTIVE
COUNTY OF PLACER**

TO: Honorable Board of Supervisors

FROM: Thomas M. Miller, Placer County Executive Officer
By: Michael E. Paddock, Senior Management Analyst
Brian Wirtz, Deputy County Counsel
Presented By: Wayne Nader, Chairman, Charter Review Committee

DATE: January 8, 2008

SUBJECT: Report of the 2007-08 Placer County Charter Review Committee

Action Requested:

Receive, review and consider the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the 2007-08 Placer County Charter Review Committee.

Background:

The Placer County Charter was adopted by the voters of the County in 1980. The County Charter is an important governing document that provides a level of flexibility in local decision making and contains provisions that guide the organizational structure, duties and responsibilities of elected and appointed officials. It also contains a provision for the periodic review and assessment of the charter document as a means to recommend any changes or additions to it. Specifically, Section 601 of the Charter requires the Board of Supervisors to convene a Charter Review Committee within five years of the last review and every five years thereafter. The purpose and function of the Charter Review Committee is to review the County Charter and after at least two public meetings prepare and present recommendations for any changes or additions to the County Charter. However, your Board is not compelled to accept or act upon any recommendation of the Committee. The Committee has completed its important work in reviewing the Charter and has completed a comprehensive report that includes specific recommendations for consideration and action by your Board. The Report of the Committee is attached to this memorandum and a summary of the recommended actions is outline below.

Summary of Recommendations:

County Counsel – appointment:

- Amend Section 507 so that the position of County Counsel shall be appointed by the Board of Supervisors and serve at its pleasure consistent with the terms of the Government Code section 27641. The Committee determined that this change will better ensure the ability of Counsel to provide objective advice insulated from political considerations.

County Superintendent of Schools – method of selection:

- Retain and make no change in the current process for selection of the elected position of County Superintendent of Schools. The Committee determined that the present method (election) used to select the County Superintendent of Schools is appropriate and valid based on the requirements and duties of that office. Also, there was no compelling evidence or information presented to the Committee that would indicate a greater benefit from changing to an appointed position.

Personnel Director – method of appointment:

- Retain and make no change in the current process for selection of the appointed position of Personnel Director. The Committee determined that although the present method of appointment may not meet the standard business model of organizational structure there are no inherent flaws or other problems with the operation and leadership of the personnel department.

Other – Miscellaneous:

- Retain and make no change to Section 303 (d) of the County Charter that allows the Board of Supervisors to inquire into the conduct of a county department that receives all of its funding from the State of California.
- Make direct and minor typographical corrections to the County Charter under the authority of Section 609 to clarify the authority of the Board of Supervisors under Section 303 (d) and in a footnote reference under Section 207 to correct a spelling error (from the word count to court).

Salary – Board of Supervisors:

- Remove the salary cap for the elected position of County Supervisor (Section 207) and replace it with an annual salary (including benefits) based on the computed average of comparable counties (eight county survey) with an annual cost-of-living-adjustment. The current computed average annual salary of comparable counties is approximately \$99,000.
- Amend Section 207 of the Charter by a provision or statement that would express the view, conclusion or fact that the office and position of County Supervisor requires the effort and time that is at least equivalent to a “full time position” or FTE.

Findings / Conclusions – Salary and Work Hours:

A recent survey of salaries and benefits conducted by Nevada County and reviewed by the Committee reveals that of the 58 counties in the State, Placer County ranks number 52 in terms of salary for its members to the Board of Supervisors. Within this ranking only six other Counties, Del Norte - \$28,080, Alpine - \$25,176, Trinity - \$25,008, Colusa - \$24,000, Modoc - \$15,859 and Tehama - \$12,540 rank lower than Placer. Also within this ranking the six Counties that rank immediately above Placer County and exceed the current salary includes Glen - \$30,285, Sierra \$31,000, Siskiyou, \$33,129, Sutter - \$34,471, Tuolumne - \$37,210 and Mariposa - \$37,290. It should be noted that some of these Counties also provide benefits in addition to the salaries listed above; however, the Committee only used the actual salary when

determining the salary recommendation. A copy of the complete survey is attached to and contained within the Report of the Committee to your Board (Attachment A).

Placer County also ranks at the bottom in salary paid to its county supervisors when compared to its eight comparable Counties that includes; Contra Costa - \$97,479, El Dorado - \$76,876, Sacramento - \$94,406, Santa Clara - \$137,318, Solano - \$90,973, Sonoma - \$111,862, Santa Cruz - \$99,424 and San Luis Obispo - \$79,014. The computed average salary of the comparable county survey is \$98,419 or \$68,419 more than Placer County (Placer County is 70% lower than the average). A copy of the complete survey is attached to and contained within the Report of the Committee to your Board (Attachment A).

The Committee has also reviewed the results of an analysis of work hours of each county supervisor and the result of this study reveal that each supervisor is working on an equivalent full time basis in order to meet the needs and demands of the office and to address constituent issues. The study indicates that in terms of documented meetings and cell phone usage each supervisor is working approximately 1300 hours. This documented time does not include other requirements such as responding to e-mails, reading the agenda package to absorb and respond to any issue or policy matter prior to the bi-monthly meeting schedule. Staff of the office has also made the observation that these documented and un-documented duties could be reasonably increased by a factor of 30% to 40% to reach a more realistic accounting of hours. By applying this factor to the documented hours and assuming a productive yearly hour total of 1780 hours suggests a full time work requirement for each member of the Board of Supervisors. A copy of the complete survey is attached to and contained within the Report of the Committee to your Board (Attachment A). A separate analysis of work hours was also conducted by the Chairman of the Committee and the results indicate that Board members may devote as much as 50 hours per week to meet the workload demands of the office. A copy of the analysis is attached to this memorandum (Attachment B).

Fiscal Impact:

There is no direct fiscal impact related to the receipt of the Report of the Committee to your Board. However, there may be an impact associated with the salary recommendation under Section 207.

Copies:

Charter Review Committee
Gayle-Garbolino-Mojica, County Superintendent of Schools
Anthony La Bouff, County Counsel
Rich Colwell, Chief Assistant County Executive Officer
Mike Boyle, Assistant County Executive Officer
Holly Heinzen, Assistant County Executive Officer
Nancy Nittler, Personnel Director
Brian Wirtz, Deputy County Counsel